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SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: ECOWAS: DES DIARRA ON TERRORISM AND A FEW ECOWAS
NOTES

REF: STATE 167569

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1. (SBU) In the absence of ECOWAS Executive Secretary Ambassador Kouyate, CDA Andrews, accompanied by Political Counselor and PolMilOff, 27 September called on General Chieck Diarra, Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defense and Security at the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja. Andrews began by passing Diarra a response to Ambassador Kouyate's letter of condolence. Diarra thanked Andrews, and, after reading the letter, informed us that ECOWAS was planning an expert-level meeting in Accra in October. He indicated that EU Officials might be present. The Executive Secretary planned to include the issue of terrorism in the meeting, Diarra stated, as a part of the discussion on crime in the sub-region. Terrorism would also be a main part of the ECOWAS plan of action for the year, Diarra added.

2. (SBU) Andrews, noting that Diarra had anticipated the point he was hoping to make, explained that while the U.S. had received messages of condolence and offers of assistance, we had not yet heard the type of statement from ECOWAS that other sub-regional bodies, such as SADC, had made. Diarra said that terrorism was, "a concern of all humanity," and stated that, "what happened in the U.S., I think, the whole world was targeted." He added, "We will be beside you in this fight." Diarra then explained further that after the meeting in Accra at expert-level, terrorism would also be discussed at the next ECOWAS Ministerial meeting, and at the next ECOWAS Heads-of-State meeting, possibly in December.

3. (U) Andrews passed Diarra a matrix listing the ECOWAS members-states and the status of ratification of each treaty listed reftel, noting that the matrix was not definitive but based on the best information held by the Embassy. (NOTE: Embassy developed the matrix based on information listed in the State Department document, "Treaties in Force, 1999." A copy of the matrix has been emailed to AF/W. If other ECOWAS Post's would like a copy of the matrix, please send an email to kaplandm"at"state.gov. END NOTE.) Diarra thanked the CDA and noted that the matrix would be useful for the discussions in Accra.

4. (SBU) ECOWAS NOTES: Diarra described the recent ACSS Seminar in Accra as "wonderful," and stated he was looking forward to his trip with Colonel Dikio to EUCOM. When asked about the status of the ECOWAS warehouse in Lagos, Diarra said that while the decision on where to put the two ECOWAS depots had not been made, he expected they would be put in Burkina-Faso (or Mali) and Benin (or Togo). Diarra noted that, since Nigeria had offered temporary accommodation and assistance for many ECOWAS bodies (such as the Parliament and Court of Justice), these institutions were presently in Nigeria. However, he opined, it would be better to spread ECOWAS institutions out among member states.

5. (SBU) COMMENT: We were pleased with the response of General Diarra on the subject of terrorism. ECOWAS as an institution is thin. However, we expect that as formal meetings occur, ECOWAS as an institution will make strong public statements against terrorism. Similar messages made to other member states will have an important effect on terrorism remaining in sharp focus during not only the expert level meeting, but also the Ministerial and Summit meetings that follow. END COMMENT.

6. (U) Freetown minimize considered.
Andrews